

SLUMBER SONG.

BY EDWIN OSCAR COOKE.

HUSH, baby, hush!
 In the west there's a glory,
 With changes of amethyst, crimson, and gold:
 The sun goes to bed like the king in a story
 Told by a poet of old.

Hush, baby, hush!
 There's a wind on the river—
 A sleepy old wind, with a voice like a sigh;
 And he sings to the rushes that dreamily quiver,
 Down where the ripples run by.

Hush, baby, hush!
 Lambs are drowsily bleating
 Down in cool meadows where daisy-buds grow,
 And the echo, aweary with all day repeating,
 Has fallen asleep long ago.

Hush, baby, hush!
 There are katydids calling
 "Good-night" to each other adown every
 breeze:
 And the sweet baby-moon has been falling and
 falling,
 Till now she is caught in the trees.
 Baby, hush!
 Hush, baby, hush!
 It is time you were winging
 Your way to the land that lies—no one knows
 where;
 It is late, baby, late—Mother's tired with her
 singing,
 Soon she will follow you there.
 Hush! Baby—Hush!

SOME BALLOON EXPERIENCES.

BY JOHN LEWEES.

NEARLY all of us have read and heard so much about balloons that it is not necessary now to consider their construction or their history. All that is intended in this article is to give an idea of some of the unusual experiences of balloonists.

It is nearly a hundred years since the first balloon was sent up in France by the brothers Montgolfier, and yet very little advancement has been made in the science of ballooning. It is true that we can make balloons that will rise as high as human beings can bear to go, but this is proved to be of little practical use. In 1862, two English gentlemen, Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell, ascended to a height of seven miles above the surface of the earth. At this immense height the air was so thin and light that they could scarcely breathe; it was intensely cold, the mercury in the thermometer going down below zero. One of the gentlemen very soon became insensible, while the other was so nearly exhausted that he was barely able to seize with his teeth the rope which opened a valve in the top of the balloon. In this way a portion of the gas was allowed to escape, and they came down very rapidly. If they had gone up much higher, it is probable that both would have perished in that cold and dangerous upper air. This ascent

proves that seven miles is too high above the surface of the earth for human beings to live in comfort or safety.

Although, as we have just seen, it is perfectly possible to make balloons go up into the air to a great height, no means have yet been discovered by which they can be made to move in any required direction. Until this is done, balloons can never be of much practical use.

Many attempts have been made to devise methods by which balloons can be propelled and steered, but, up to this time, none of them have been found to answer the purpose. In *Scribner's Monthly* for February, 1879, Mr. E. C. Stedman described an aerial ship which he invented. His theories and plans seem to be quite practicable, and when a ship of this kind is made, it is to be hoped that we shall be able to navigate the air in any direction we please. But this is all in the future.

Not many years ago there was made in New York a balloon in which three gentlemen intended to try to cross the Atlantic Ocean. This great balloon was not to be propelled by any machinery, but to be carried on its course by a current of air which it is believed continually moves at a certain altitude from west to east, across the Atlantic. But this

balloon was made of poor materials, and it burst before it was entirely filled with gas. It is fortunate that this accident happened when it did, for if the balloon had burst when it was over the ocean, it would have been a sad thing for the three gentlemen. If this attempt had succeeded, it is probable that by this time there would be balloons making regular trips to Europe; still I do not know of any breeze or current that would blow them back again.

But, although we are not yet able to direct the

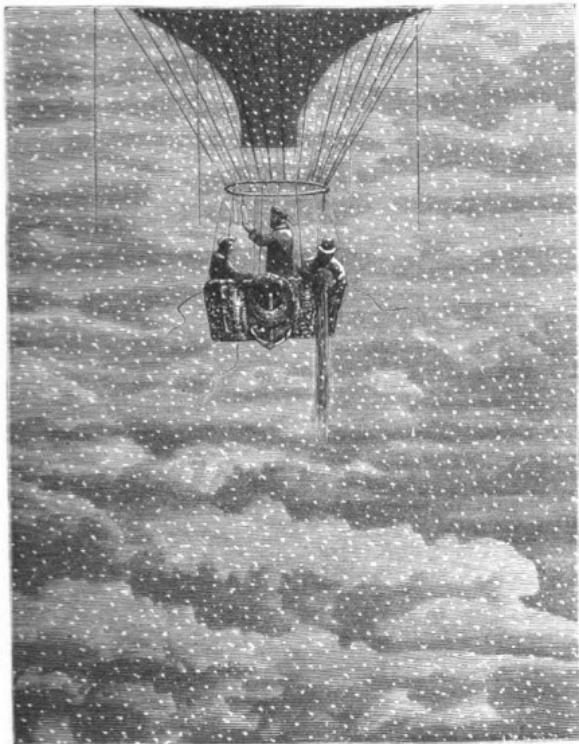
connected with the ground by a rope. From this balloon the men could see what the enemy was doing, and how his forces were disposed, and were high enough to be out of gunshot.

But the most important use to which balloons were ever applied was during the siege of Paris, in the late war between France and Prussia. It was impossible for any one to get out of the city, excepting in a balloon, and a number of persons availed themselves of this way of leaving Paris.*

Monsieur Gambetta, the distinguished French statesman, was among those who escaped in a balloon. These ascents were very important, because the balloons not only took persons, but carrier-pigeons, and these pigeons afterward flew back to Paris bearing news from the outside world; and in no other way could the besieged citizens get such news. Some of the balloons came down in the French provinces, some were blown over to England, and one was carried across the North Sea into Sweden. Some of them came down among the Prussians, and their unfortunate occupants were captured by the enemy. Out of the sixty-four balloons which left Paris during the siege, only two were lost and never heard of after.

One of the advantages enjoyed by balloonists is, that they can in a measure choose their own weather, especially in the summer-time. By this I mean that they can rise above the clouds into clear sunlight, no matter how dreary or stormy it may be near the earth, and they can go up high enough to be just as cool as they could possibly wish.

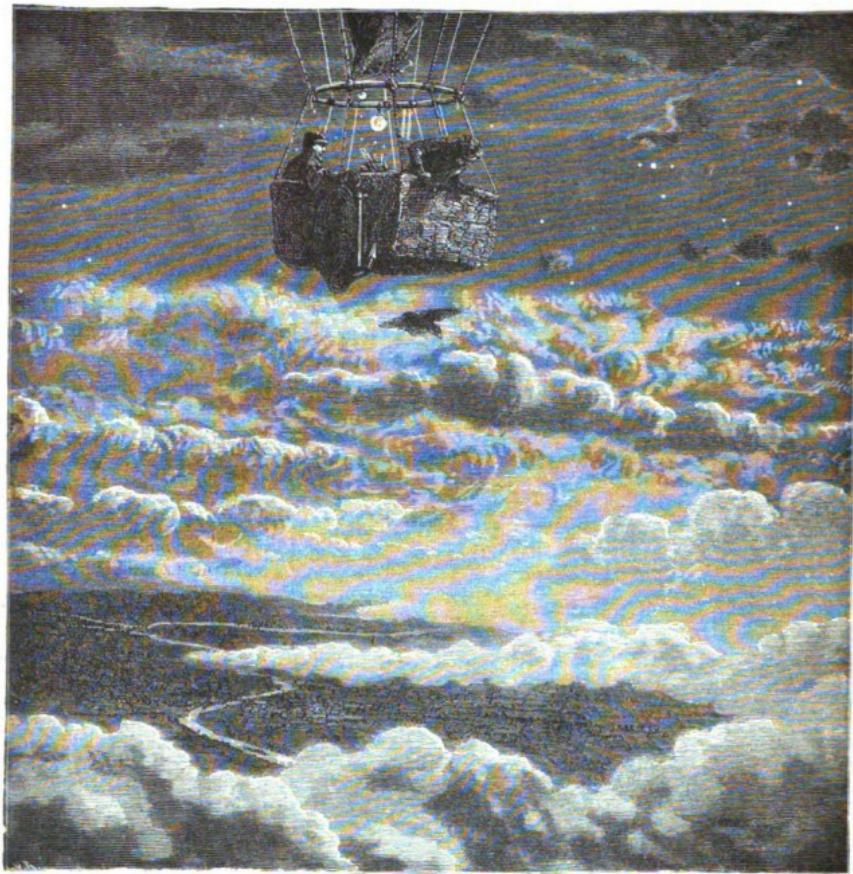
In one of their ascensions, Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell, of whom I have before spoken, left the earth in a balloon on a cloudy, sultry day in June. They passed through cloud after cloud, fog after fog, expecting every moment to come out into sunlight, and to see the blue sky above them; but they went upward through this vast mass of fog and cloud until they had attained a height of four miles; and still they were not out of the clouds. It was not considered prudent to go any higher, and so they very reluctantly began to descend without having penetrated through these immense



A SNOW-STORM ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

course of balloons, they have, in late years, been put to some practical use. During our late war, balloons were used by the Union army for the purpose of making military observations. Two of them were attached to General McClellan's army, and, with the gas generators and other apparatus, were drawn about in wagons from place to place. When it was desired to make an observation of the works or position of the enemy, a balloon with several men was sent up to a sufficient height, and

* See the story of "Puck Parker," in ST. NICHOLAS for April, 1878. Page 416.



LOSING A PIGEON FROM A BALLOON, AT NIGHT.

layers of cloud and fog. On coming down, they passed through a fall of rain, and then, some distance below that, through a snow-storm, the air all about them being thick with snow-flakes. This, it must be remembered, was in the summer-time, when the people on the earth had no idea that a snow-storm was going on above them, or that the clouds they saw over them were four miles thick. On another occasion, three balloonists went upward through a snow-storm very much like the one which Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell passed through during their descent.

People who make balloon voyages very often take birds with them, especially pigeons, which

they let loose at a great height. When not too high above the earth, pigeons frequently fly directly to their homes, but at a height of three or four miles they sometimes seem bewildered, and act as if they did not know how to find their way back to the ground. They fly around and around, and occasionally alight upon the top of the balloon, and stay there. Sometimes, when the height is very great, the air is too thin to support a flying bird, and the pigeon drops like lead until it reaches denser air, when it is able to fly.

Dogs and cats are often taken up. They are sent down attached to a parachute, which is a contrivance like an immense umbrella, and is

intended to prevent the rapid fall of anything suspended beneath it; the resistance of the air under the wide-spreading parachute causing it to descend very slowly and gradually. In this way, cats and dogs have come to the ground from balloons without receiving any injury, although it is not to be supposed that they fancied the trip.

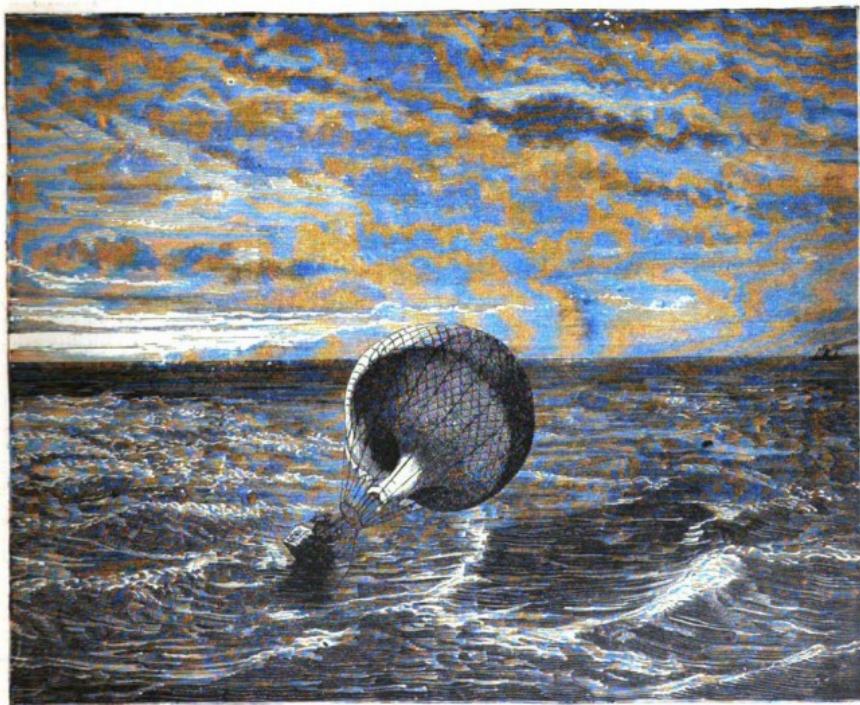
Balloonists themselves have frequently come down to the earth in parachutes, descending from a height of one or two miles. Generally these descents have been made in safety, yet there have been cases when the parachutes were not properly constructed, and when the unfortunate balloonists came down too fast, and were killed.

Not only when they descend by means of a parachute, do air-voyagers, or aéronauts, as they are called, run great risks of injury or death, but also when they come down in their balloons. In fact, it is much easier and safer to go up in a balloon than

perienced balloonists frequently manage to come down very gradually and gently, but sometimes the car of the balloon strikes the earth with a great shock; and if the wind is strong, the balloon is often blown along just above the surface of the ground, striking against trees, fences, and rocks, until its occupants, or some persons on the ground, manage to stop it.

But a descent into a river, a lake, or an ocean is one of the greatest dangers that a balloonist can expect. As I have before said, there has been no way devised by which a balloon may be made to move in any desired direction. Consequently when one comes down over the water the aéronaut generally endeavors to throw out all his sand-bags and other heavy things, in order that the balloon may rise again, and not come down until it has been blown over the land.

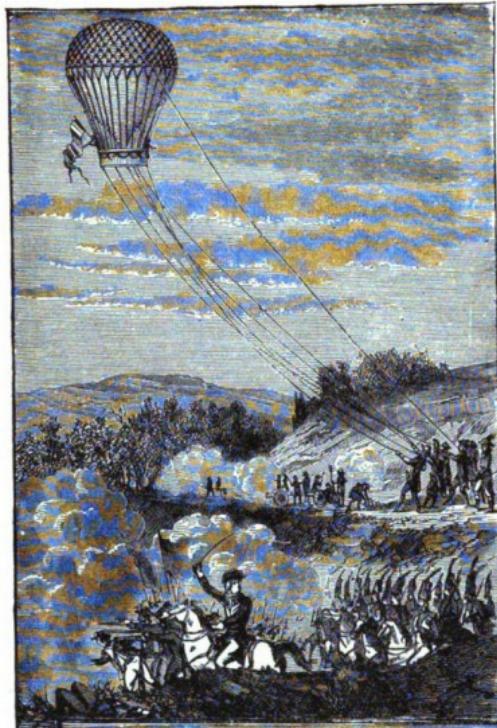
With regard to rivers and small lakes, this plan



"SOMETIMES DIPPING THE CAR INTO THE WAVES."

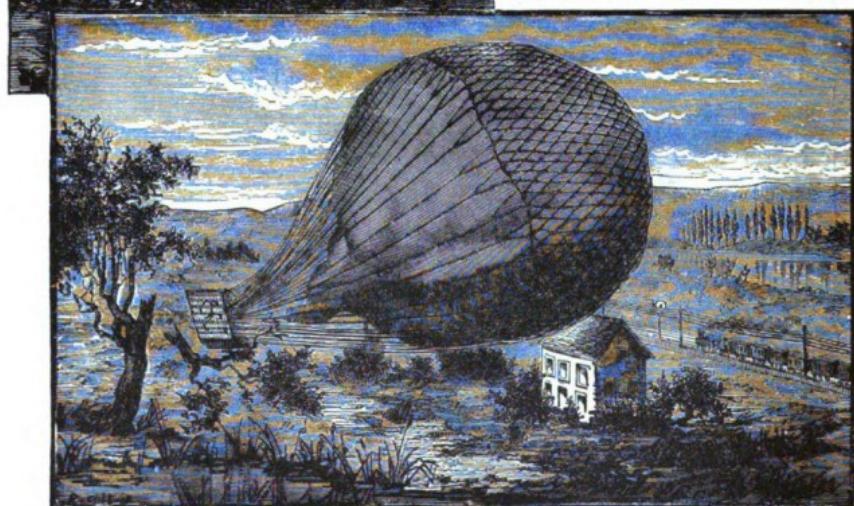
to come down in one. It is seldom possible for the aéronaut to know exactly, or to regulate just as he would wish, the rapidity of its descent. Ex-

may often be successful, but when the balloon is being carried out to sea, it generally comes down into the water sooner or later, and if the balloonists



are not rescued by some passing boat or vessel, they are almost certain to be drowned. In cases such as these, the balloons are often blown for a long distance over the surface of the ocean, sometimes dipping the car into the waves, then, perhaps, rising a little and sailing for a short distance above them, and then dragging the car and its occupants with great rapidity through the water. The lower picture on this page shows an incident that occurred on the land in October, 1863. An immense balloon, built by M. Nadar, and appropriately named "Le Géant" [The Giant], rose from Paris and made a pleasant voyage in the air. But when it neared the earth again, the vast ball was seized by the wind, and for hours the two-story car of wicker-work was dashed against rocks, trees, and houses, until the nine travelers, with broken limbs and many bruises, were rescued near Rethem, in Hanover. Many people would be frightened to death, even if they were not actually killed, during such adventures as these; but aéronauts must, of necessity, be brave men, for if a man is easily frightened, it is a wise thing for him to keep out of a balloon.

As I have said, balloons were found useful during the Civil War in the United States, but the first time a balloon was employed in warfare was at the battle of



Fleurus, Belgium, in 1794, between the French and the Austrians. Upon this occasion the balloon was managed as a kite, in the manner shown in the upper picture on the preceding page.

Sometimes balloonists have had very curious ideas. Mr. Green, one of the most distinguished aéronauts of England, once made an ascent on the back of a pony. The animal was so fastened on a platform beneath the car that he could not lie down nor move about. His owner then got upon his back, and the balloon rose high into the air. They came down in perfect safety, and the pony did not appear to have made the slightest objection to his aerial flight. Other aéronauts have made successful ascents on horseback and in various dangerous ways, but some of them lost their lives while performing these fool-hardy feats.

Occasionally balloonists make long voyages. Mr. Wise, our greatest American aéronaut, once made a trip of one thousand one hundred and twenty miles in a balloon. He was a very successful balloonist. He made several hundred ascents, and was one of the few aéronauts who possessed a scientific knowledge of his profession.

He made a study of air-currents, and all matters relating to ballooning, and wrote a book on the subject. It is not long, however, since he lost his life during a balloon journey, so we see that even the most experienced navigators of the air are not free from danger.

But the practiced balloonist does not seem to fear danger any more than does the sailor, who steers his ship across the stormy ocean. There seems to be a fascination about ballooning, and some persons have made a great many ascents. Mr. Green made more than five hundred ascents in balloons. He, however, escaped all serious dangers, and died at a good old age.

The incidents which I have described show that, although balloons have, so far, been of little practical service to mankind, the people who are fond of rising two or three miles into the air very often meet with curious experiences, and that these unusual things generally occur when they are descending to the earth. If any of us could feel certain that it was not necessary for us to come down again, it might be a very pleasant and prudent thing to go up in a balloon.



"MISTER BWOWN TAKES SISTER ANNIE VIDIN' 'MOST EVVY DAY. 'CAUSE SHE 'S A BID DIRL, I S'POSE. WONDER WHAT MADE
ME BE SO YOUNG. ONLY FREE YEARS OLD! I'D RAVVER BE FOUR. BUT DEN, A DOOD MANY FOLKS
IS FREE. 'MOST ALL 'ITTLE DIRLS AINT ANY OLDER 'N 'AT."

ST. NICHOLAS.

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AN UNWILLING BALLOONIST.

BY IDAH MEACHAM STROBRIDGE.

MORE than forty years ago, there was a news-boy who had a wonderful experience. But if the man — who was the boy then — is still living, he does not, I am sure he could not, ever forget even for an hour the wonderful, terrible experience that was his when he was carried through the air, hundreds of feet above the earth's surface, an unwilling aéronaut.

It happened during California's early days, when amusements for the people were few. A balloon ascension was enough to attract crowds from far and near. So, when flaming placards announced the ascension of a balloon from Oakland, a suburb of San Francisco, across the bay, thousands made ready to witness it. The promoters of the affair had arranged to charter for the day the ferry-boats plying between the two places; and in the day's increased passenger-traffic — which might reasonably be expected to be enormous — they counted upon a profit sufficient to insure success in the undertaking.

The day dawned beautifully clear — a perfect, flawless, midsummer California day.

By eight o'clock the tide of sightseers was flowing into Oakland; by ten a great crowd of eager, waiting people was assembled there. At noon the crowd had become a multitude.

There were men in ranchmen's dress, men dressed as miners, men from "the city," men that were *vaqueros*, or cattle-men employed

on the ranches, women and children, and the Spanish Dons and their families. And there, fastened at its moorings, amid the crowd, was the balloon in which a professional aéronaut was to make the ascension. The crowds thronged about, examining it with curiosity; the men talking and smoking, the women moving about under the live-oaks with their children dragging at their skirts and eating peanuts.

The hour for the ascension came and passed. There was a delay in getting the great balloon in order. People became impatient. There was, it seemed, not enough gas to bear up the weight of the basket and the aéronaut. Experiments were tried while the restless spectators grumbled at the delay.

A man of lighter weight took the place of the professional aéronaut. Still the balloon refused to lift the basket so heavily laden.

Mutterings were heard from the dissatisfied people. They began to declare it all a mere scheme to attract great crowds over from San Francisco for the sake of the ferry-ticket returns. There would be no ascension, they said — the whole thing was a fraud to extract money from the people.

The aéronaut and his assistants became angry at these speeches, and finally cut the basket loose, and cast it aside. At once the balloon struggled to bound into space. Then, in the

suspended hoop, only three or four feet in diameter, the aéronaut seated himself.

The balloon, though it tugged at the guy ropes, showed there was still too great a weight. The aéronaut got out in despair. How much weight would the balloon carry? He looked for some one lighter than himself. A slim, half grown youth took his place. That was better; but even he was not light enough. Looking around for some one still lighter, the aéronaut saw a barefooted newsboy, wearing only a thin cotton shirt, a pair of trousers reaching to the knee, and a broken straw hat.

"Here, Bub," said he, "quick! Sit in this hoop a minute, will you, and let me see if the balloon will raise your weight?"

The little fellow laid down his bundle of papers, placing beside them a basket of peanuts that he carried. Then he seated himself on the slender curving ring. Steadying himself within the frail circle by holding with both hands to the two sides, he sat there with his legs dangling below him, feeling quite important in being chosen. He was sure the other boys were envying him even this approach to an ascent in a balloon.

Yes; there was sufficient gas to hold up the boy's weight. That was something; but it would not yet bear the weight of a man. Something must be done. An ascent must be made to satisfy the grumbling crowd. Some alterations must be made so that the aéronaut himself could go up as he had advertised.

They loosened some of the ropes as he directed, and then —

No one ever seemed to know how it happened, but with a bound the balloon somehow wrested itself from its moorings, and shot upward, bearing aloft the barefooted little newsboy, sitting in the swinging hoop!

There was a great cry went up from the people; and then followed the silence that comes of horror. Fifty feet! — a hundred! — five hundred! — already a thousand feet above their heads he was, yet speeding helplessly upward into that vast empty space where none could reach him to lend aid!

Would he fall? Would he faint? Women clutched their own children as they saw the little lad swept skyward; and there were men

who covered their eyes, not daring to look lest they should see the little figure fall.

His white shirt showed as a glimmering speck in the summer sky, as the balloon soared to greater heights. Higher, still higher, farther and farther away, he was borne by the winds coming in from the sea, toward the Coast Range of mountains.

Vaqueros and ranchmen who had ridden in from the hills to witness the ascent now sprang to their saddles and followed as fast as their horses could run, in a mad race with the balloon, as if they might perchance be near to help the little waif.

When the first sense of the terrible situation had come to those who gazed horror-stricken at the boy, the multitude became a mob, and many turned in excited wrath to seek the men who had planned the ascension, as though to wreak vengeance on them for the unexpected accident. They were gone; they had not dared to stay and brave the consequences if the boy was killed. If — ! Was there a chance that he might escape? Who could hope?

The crowd stood watching till the tiny speck went out of sight behind the clouds. Then they went home. How long could the poor little waif cling to the ring?

When the balloon took the first great leap skyward, as the stay-lines loosed their hold, the boy hardly knew what had happened. Then, seeing the fast increasing distance between himself and the upturned faces, there came over him a fear — as yet but a child's fear — of his strange situation, without a full understanding of it.

He heard the shouts of the people as he sped upward. He knew that the balloon had escaped their hold; still, it was a moment or two ere he grasped the full meaning of the accident — before he was overwhelmed by the knowledge that he had been snatched away from the earth, and was being rapidly borne toward the cloud heights — alone!

Then he knew there was neither help nor escape. He was in mid-air on a narrow strip of wood, with only his two little slim hands to hold him back from the downward plunge into eternity.

Earthly sounds came dully to his ears as he rose. Faint and far away were they; fainter



"THE BALLOON SOMEHOW WRESTED ITSELF FROM ITS MOORINGS AND SHOT UPWARD, BEARING aloft the barefooted LITTLE NEWSBOY, SITTING IN THE SWINGING HOOP!"

and fainter they grew till, at last, they had ceased altogether. The uplifted faces of the people, among whom he had been but a moment before, appeared now to him no larger than the silver coins they had paid him that morning for peanuts. Finally, he could not see their faces at all; the people themselves were but tiny objects growing smaller—smaller, as they moved about, till they disappeared altogether. The cattle in the fields, the horses about the town, first seemed no larger than dogs; then small as kittens; then like little mice; then as ants; and at last disappeared from his vision. Houses diminished to groups of chips and blocks, to be distinguished only by their color from the trees that no longer seemed trees, but mere bits of moss growing close to the ground. High hills flattened down to wide uneven plains; and mountains became mole-hills.

The ocean! He had never seen it like this before; nor the bay, nor the river that, like a silver ribbon, wound oceanward.

Once he tried shutting his eyes as he noted how fast—how very fast—the earth was slipping away from his sight; but it made him all the more afraid and dizzy, and he quickly opened them again.

Oh, he was so, *so* far away from everybody and everything! By and by he could see nothing earthward—*nothing!* All was too far away. He was alone in the clouds,—drifting—drifting, he knew not where. And it was so desolate there—so very lonely!

He had from the first instinctively clutched with all his small might at the sides of the hoop. In that grip, he knew, lay his only salvation. What would his mother—alone at home—think when night came and he did not as usual return, with the money earned from selling peanuts and papers? He wished there was some way in which he could let her know he was alive, so that she would n't worry. She would hear of what had happened, and be sure he had been killed. If he could only see her for a minute! If—! His lips quivered, but he did not cry. He dreaded to hear the sound of his own voice up there in the solitude of that vast, awful, empty space.

There he clung, stunned by fear, while, jour-

neying with the clouds, the balloon crossed over valleys and streams, over hills and forests. He could see nothing earthward save clouds; but he was sure he was drifting farther and farther away from the spot which had been home.

Then the sun went down, and the twilight crept up to him from below; and with the setting of the sun, fog-banks came tumbling in from the sea, crossing the bay and hurrying toward him with their wet chilliness. He had shivered ever since he had reached the cloud heights; now he was becoming numbed with the cold. His hands and legs ached painfully from the night's chill touch. Bareheaded, barefooted, and with only the thin little shirt over his shoulders, he was carried along northward through the gathering darkness. Fog clouds shut out all beneath him—just the great sky overhead.

By and by the stars came out. Night was all around him.

He knew the earth was far, very far below;—that he was miles high in the air. Yet, somehow, the stars, as he looked aloft, seemed just as far away as ever. He was terribly lonely; and his body ached so! Ached from cold and exposure; ached because of so long sitting in the same tense position.

It became darker—very dark, after a while. And for a long time he was conscious of nothing but his sufferings. Even his peril was forgotten.

Suddenly he became aware (he could not tell how) that the balloon was beginning to sink earthward. Yes; he could feel the rush of air through which he was dropping down to dear Mother Earth again! Slowly, but surely floating down. What would happen when he reached there? He could not rightly guess. He hoped the balloon would not fall with him into the water. But he was afraid it might; for there seemed to be so much more water on the earth's surface than he had supposed.

Dropping down—down—down, he waited while the minutes went by, to meet what might be coming. At last he thought (no, he must be mistaken; it *could n't* be!)—he thought he saw lights, here and there, beneath him. Straining his eyes, he looked again. Yes, lights!

They were lights! That meant people were not far away. Lights gleaming from the windows of scattered ranch houses! He began to tremble so from excitement that he could hardly keep his hold on the hoop. He began to sob; and, for the first time, tears flowed down his cheeks. He was getting close to earth once more!

It was densely dark; but presently he *felt*—rather than saw—his nearness to earth; and in a minute more the balloon struck against an oak-tree, dragging him along through the rough branches.

As he crashed into it, his hands were wrenched loose and he fell. The balloon, lightened once more of its weight, shot upward and was gone.

The little hero found himself on the ground scratched, bruised, and bleeding, but with no bones broken, nor suffering any serious hurt.

On solid earth once more!

Only they who have had an experience as terrifying can ever know how much that knowledge meant to him.

Stumbling along in the dark he made his way across the fields to a distant light. It proved to be a ranch house. And there the bruised and bleeding boy was made welcome, although the strange story that he told found little belief. When morning came he was put on board a steamboat at Benicia (that being the nearest town to the ranch where he had fallen), and was taken to San Francisco.

The welcome he received from his nearly distracted mother can be imagined.

His experience was a nine-days' wonder; and column after column of the daily papers was filled with it. He was "interviewed"; he was lionized; he was allowed to keep the entire profits of all the papers he could sell containing the account of his wonderful aerial voyage.

The widow and her son, whose poverty had been extreme but a fortnight before, were now made comfortable by gifts as varied as they were numerous; but it is to be doubted if the little balloonist could ever be induced to risk another voyage in the air.



A JUNE EVENING.

ED-DY'S BAL-LOON.

ED-DY was a lit-tle boy, who lived on a farm. One day he went with his fa-ther, moth-er, and sis-ter, to the coun-ty fair, four miles a-way.

Ed-dy saw a great man-y won-der-ful things that day, but there was noth-ing there that he want-ed so much as a red bal-loon, so he bought one with some mon-ey giv-en him to spend "as he pleased."

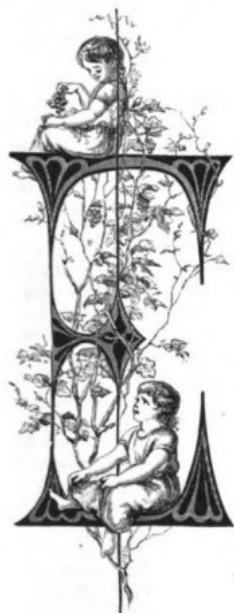
All the way home Ed-dy held the string, and the bal-loon float-ed a-bove the car-riage. When he went in-to the house he tied it to the chair-back, and left it there, while he sat down and ate his sup-per.

Af-ter sup-per he a-mused him-self by try-ing to make the bal-loon stay down on the floor. As soon as it rose, he struck it with the palm of his hand, and made it go down a-gain; but, as it jumped up ev-ery time, he had to strike it a-gain and a-gain.

Now, Ed-dy lived in an old house, with a large, open fire-place; as he was chas-ing his play-thing, all at once he came to the fire-place; the bal-loon slipped a-way from his hand and went right up the big chim-ney.

Ed-dy and his sis-ter An-nie ran in-to the yard, but they could not catch the fly-a-way; it rose high-er than the house-top. They watched it go up, up, up, un-til it was on-ly a speck a-against the blue sky. Then it went so ver-y high that, al-though they kept look-ing and look-ing, at length, they could not see it at all; and that was the last of Ed-dy's bal-loon.





GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY JOEL STACY.

V'RY little grape, dear, that clings unto a vine,
Expects some day to ripen its little drop of wine.
Ev'ry little girl, I think, expects in time to be
Exactly like her own mamma—as grand and sweet and free!
Ev'ry little boy who has a pocket of his own,
Expects to be the biggest man the world has ever known.
Ev'ry little piggy-wig that makes its little wail,
Expects to be a great, big pig with a very curly tail.
Ev'ry little lambkin, too, that frisks upon the green,
Expects to be the finest sheep that ever yet was seen.
Ev'ry little baby-colt expects to be a horse;
Ev'ry little pup expects to be a dog, of course.
Ev'ry little kitten pet, so tender and so nice,
Expects to be a grown-up cat and live on rats and mice.
Ev'ry little fluffy chick, in downy yellow drest,
Expects some day to crow and strut, or cackle at its best.
Ev'ry little baby-bird that peeps from out its nest,
Expects some day to cross the sky from glowing east to west.

Now ev'ry hope I've mentioned here will bring its sure event,
Provided nothing happens, dear, to hinder or prevent.

IN THE POND AND ON THE MARSH.

(Translated from the German.)

BY ABBY S. ALGER.

CHAPTER I.

THE DOLL UNDER THE BRIAR-BUSH.

THERE was once a little girl, whose name was Beata. She was only five years old, but she was a good, clever little girl. On her birthday, her old aunt made her a present of a doll who was a real beauty. There was not a fault to be found with the dear creature, except that perhaps her left eyebrow was drawn up a tiny grain too high.

"It's just as if she were frowning a little bit with one eyebrow. Is n't she pleased?" asked Beata, when she first took her into her arms.

"Oh, yes," said aunty, "but she does n't know you yet. She always raises her eyebrow a little

when she tries to examine any one carefully. She only wants to see if you are a good little girl."

"Yes, but now she sees that I am; for I think her brows look just alike," said Beata.

The doll grew very dear to her, almost dearer than even little Marie and Louise, although they were her best friends.

One day she went into the yard with her doll. She had given her a name now, and they had become trusty allies. The doll was called Beata too, because that was the little girl's own name, and because aunty was called Beata. It was Spring time, and in one corner of the yard, round a pond, there was a nice green plat, with thick, soft grass; and in it grew a low, bushy willow-tree covered all over

with the yellow tassels which, you know, German children call goslings. And they do look like goslings, for every one has soft yellow down on it, and will float on the water, but then they can't move. So big Beata—to be sure she was only five years old, but still she was much bigger than the other—and little Beata agreed that they would pull the goslings from the tree and throw them into the pond, for they knew they would like it as well as the big goslings did, which they had seen swimming about there. It was really big Beata who made the proposal, but little Beata said nothing to the contrary; for no one can think how intelligent and good-natured she always was. So big Beata climbed up into the willow-tree and gathered the cunning yellow goslings into her white apron, and then she counted them, and when she had counted as far as twenty-two, she said that now she thought they had enough, and little Beata never said a word against it. She came down again, and that was very hard work, because she had to hold her apron together with one hand all the time. She fancied that little Beata called out to her to drop the goslings down on the grass, but she dared not, for fear they would hurt themselves in the fall.

Then they both ran to the pond, and big Beata helped her friend to fasten her legs close between two of the palings round it, so that she could stand there comfortably and watch the dear little goslings swimming about in the water. One gosling after another slipped in, and as they approached the water, they seemed to come to life and begin to move a little. That was fun! Big Beata clapped her hands at the darling wee little downy birds, and when she just helped little Beata a tiny bit, she clapped her hands too. But soon all the goslings lay quite still and would not stir. That was very stupid, and Beata asked her little namesake if she did not think she (big Beata) could lean over the edge of the pond a little and blow on them, for then she truly believed they would come to life again. Little Beata did not answer.

So big Beata bent over the pond and blew on the nearest ones. Yes! that was right—they began to move at once. But those which were farthest away lay quite still. "Some of them are very silly!" said Beata, and she leaned far, far over the edge; her hand slipped on the wet railing and—plump! she fell right into the water; it was very, very cold, and it closed over her head and carried off her straw hat; she had no time to hear whether little Beata screamed, but she felt sure she did. When her head rose above the water again, she saw her dear friend little Beata standing, mute with alarm, staring at her, with her right hand extended over the water. Big Beata hastily grasped it, and little Beata made herself as stiff as she could and stood

fast between the palings and held her dear friend up. So she kept her face above water long enough to give a shriek of terror, and her father and mother both came running to her; they were pale with fear and pulled her out. She was dripping wet, the water streamed from her, and she was so frightened and cold that her teeth chattered. Her father was going to carry her right into the house; she begged him for mercy's sake to take little Beata too, lest she should fall into the pond also. "For it was she who saved me," she said.

Beata was put to bed, and little Beata had to lie beside her. When she grew sleepy and had said her "Our Father," she patted her little friend and said: "I can never thank you enough for saving me from the horrid, deep pond, dear little Beata. Of course I know that our Lord helped you to stand fast between the pales and to make yourself stiff; but still it was you and no one else, who reached me your hand, so that I did not sink to the bottom, and for this you shall be my best friend as long as I live, and when I grow big you shall stand god-mother to my first daughter; she shall be named little Beata like you." Then she kissed the little one and fell asleep.

But big Beata had a brother, who was still bigger than she; he was eight years old, and was a wild, unruly fellow. His name was Viggo; he had read in an old history book about a horrid, bearded Viking, who had the same name, and who sailed from land to land and killed people, and often took prisoners, and all the gold and silver he could find, on board his ship. And so Viggo got himself a little axe, such as he read the old Viking had, and told his sister that henceforth she must call him Viggo *Viking*, for that was what he meant to be when he grew up. He chased the hens and ducks in the yard and tried to cut off their heads with his axe; they shrieked and ran away, which made the little Viking all the bolder. But when he went into the goose-fields with his axe on his shoulder and raised his war-cry, the old gander grew angry, bent his long neck and snapped at Viggo Viking's legs so savagely that he dropped his axe and ran howling away. For the old gander knew that Vikings had no right to cut off heads in their own country, not even on the farthest side of the goose-pond.

One day Viggo Viking came to his sister, looking very fierce; he had a paper helmet on and was scowling furiously.

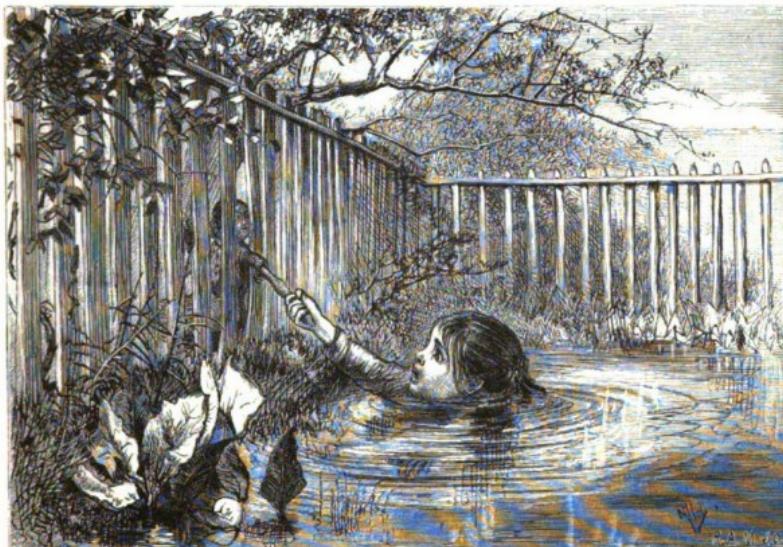
"Now, I'm going to carry off somebody. I've come out on purpose," said he. "You are too big, but I shall certainly take little Beata. I shall carry her a great way off, at least to the plowed field, and perhaps as far as the pasture. And you will never see her again as long as you live."

"You're a bad boy, and do nothing but mis-

chief; mother said so, too, only the other day," replied his sister. "Little Beata never did a single thing to plague you; she never even said a cross word to you."

"Not done anything to plague me!" said the Viking. "Did n't she stand down in the yard under the big geranium in the flower pot, when I came and fastened my wooden horse there? Don't you suppose I saw how she pushed the horse so that he fell down and broke his left hind leg? If I

and that she might not be wet when it rained or dew fell, her big friend laid a green grassy turf over her. There little Beata had to sit alone, but it was no great hardship, for she had her cloak, which she could put on at evening when it grew cold, and a sugar-cake on a little mound beside her, and the roses smelt sweet about her. Then big Beata bade her good-bye and good-night, and told her to be quiet, and to be sure not to stir out, for fear Viggo Viking should set eyes on her; big Beata



LITTLE BEATA HOLDS HER DEAR FRIEND UP.

did my duty I should cut off her head," said the Viking, trying the edge of his little axe with his finger.

"Oh! you really are a dreadful boy," cried Beata, "but I shall contrive to hide little Beata so snugly that you can never set your bloody hands on her. You may trust me for that."

Then she went straight to her little friend and told her with great distress what a wicked villain Viggo was, and that he meant to murder her, and that she, big Beata, dared not keep her in the house another day. "But I know where I'll hide you, so that he never can find you."

She took the little one and went across the field to a great pile of stones. On the top of this grew a briar rose in full bloom, the flowers drooping to the ground on all sides. It formed a sweet-smelling little bower of green twigs, and there little Beata was to live securely, sitting on a grassy couch;

promised most faithfully to visit her next morning to see how she had slept and how she was getting on.

Next morning Beata only stopped to wash her little face before she ran to her friend; she hardly took time to braid her hair. She was very much afraid that little Beata had lain awake and been frightened, because she was alone in her leafy hut at night. Beata hurried as fast as she could and reached the bush quite breathless and exhausted. But imagine her horror! Outside the bower lay little Beata, her head was chopped off and lay at her feet. Viggo Viking was the guilty one, as Beata but too plainly saw; for he had left his little axe behind him on the heap of stones. Big Beata had never been so wretched in the whole course of her existence. She burst into tears, snatched up her little friend and kissed her again and again. Then she dug a grave beneath the briar rose and laid her in it. She set her head on her shoulders

again, and spread the grassy turf which had sheltered her in life softly and lightly over her. And after that she went slowly and mournfully home.

Who would be her best friend now? who would never have any will but hers? and who would stand godmother to her first daughter, when she grew big?

CHAPTER II.

THE FLOATING ISLAND.

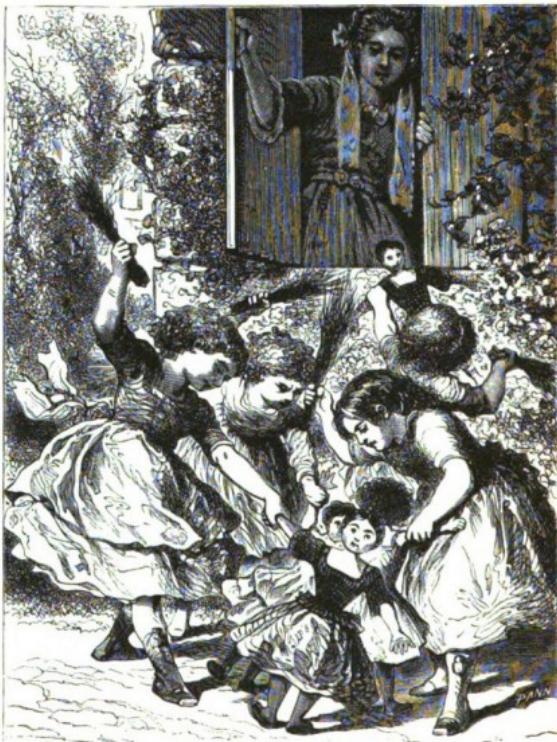
BEATA had now grown two whole years bigger, but she had never found a doll to equal little Beata. None were so good and obedient, and none so neat and pretty—all her dolls were too rosy-cheeked, or else they had no idea of dressing themselves properly; they were all stiff and unnatural when they tried to move their arms or legs, and it was almost useless to try to have any conversation with them. They were like the dolls in a story she had read, whose mothers had to whip them every Monday morning to keep them good through the week. But Beata had a lovely doll-house now, with chairs and tables and a chest of drawers in one corner.

It was Saturday, and on Sunday Beata expected her friends Marie and Louise to make her a visit, so she wanted to make the baby-house look as pretty as possible. All the furniture was set in order, and juniper and yellow dandelions were strewn on the floor; but still she needed a few trifles to set on the chest of drawers.

Beata knew what she would do. She remembered seeing on the hill behind the house the loveliest little snail shells imaginable, round and smooth, and spotted with yellow and brown. They would look splendidly on the chest of drawers, if she could only find some that had n't any snails in them. She ran to the spot and crept about among the hazel bushes and under the walnut trees on the hill, and found empty snail shells by the dozen. But the best of all was, that she heard a bird cry out very oddly right down in the marsh; she peeped out between the green branches and saw a big, big bird swimming there; it had a long blue neck and white breast, but its back was bright black. It

swam away over the marsh so fast that it left a wake in the water behind it, and then suddenly it dived down under the water and disappeared.

Beata stood gazing at the water, watching for it



THE MONDAY MORNING WHIPPING.

to come up again, but she waited and waited, and no bird came. She began to be afraid that the dear thing was drowned; then she saw it pop up far away, almost midway out in the water. It beat its wings about so that great rings spread around it wider and wider on the smooth surface. Then it swam again, very slowly, toward a wee little green island, which lay there. When it reached the island, it stretched its neck in the air and looked about in every direction, and then crept into the tall reeds which overhung the edge. Beata stood and looked at the beautiful little island; it was lovely and small, and oval in shape, with tiny bays running into it here and there. There were ozier bushes on the grass in spots, and at one end grew a slender white birch. Beata thought she had

never seen anything so charming as this little green island out on the smooth, dark water.

At last the evening breeze began to blow and to ripple the water. Then Beata knew that she must hurry home; she stooped to pick up a few more snail shells to give to Marie and Louise, for there were some right at her feet; she looked up again and peered through the bushes to bid the island good-night—only fancy! the little green island was gone! She could not believe her own eyes; she thought that she must have moved without knowing it, so that the bushes hid the island from her; but no, she was in the self-same spot. She thought of mermaids and fairies and ran up the hill as fast as she could. But when she reached the top she looked around again. She was even more astonished than before, for now she caught sight of the little green island, but far from the place where she first saw it; it was sailing slowly across the marsh in the southerly breeze, and the little white birch was the sail.

As soon as Beata reached home she told Anne, the nurse, what she had seen. Anne knew the floating island well; it had been in the marsh for many a year. Every year a loon built her nest there, and Anne had her own opinion, both about the loon and the island; but when Beata teased to know more, old Anne only shook her head; for she was not one to tell all that she knew. At last she yielded, and said that if any one stands on the floating island, and takes the loon's egg from the nest for a moment, and wishes something, it will surely come to pass, if the loon does not forsake her nest, but hatches the egg in peace.

"If the loon sits on her nest till Autumn, even if you wished to become an English princess, it will certainly happen," said old Anne. "But there is one thing more to be remembered. That you must not say a single word about it to any living creature."

"Not even to your father and mother?" asked Beata.

"No," answered Anne, "nor to any mother's son or daughter."

Beata thought of nothing but the island the whole evening, and when she fell asleep she dreamed of nothing else all night.

As soon as she was up in the morning, she begged her father very prettily to row Marie and Louise and herself out to the floating island when they came that afternoon, and he promised to do so. But he also asked what made her think of it, and what she wanted to do there. At first she was going to tell him all; but she remembered Anne's words, and did not tell him all, but only that she longed to go there, because the little green island looked so cunning.

"Yes, it is pretty, and you shall see a loon's nest there too," said her father, stroking her brown hair.

Beata grew quite red in the face and tears came into her eyes; for she knew about the loon's nest very well, and felt that she had deceived her father, and that she had never done before.

In the afternoon her father took the three little girls to the marsh.

The water was calm, dark and bright; the pine wood on one shore and the green hill on the other were reflected upside down in it. Here and there were broad green leaves, and big, shining white marsh flowers, swimming on the dark water. Beata's friends thought it was the most delightful sight in the world, and begged her father to stop and fish up some of the lovely flowers for them. But Beata only longed for the floating island.

There it lay in the midst of the marsh, and when they approached it it looked as if there were two small islands, one above and one below the water, the last almost more beautiful than the first. The father rowed close up to it and around it, and when they came to the other side the loon jumped suddenly out of the rushes into the water and dived down.

"Here is the loon's nest," said the father, and steered the raft that way.

The girls bent over the raft while the father held them, one by one, and they were indeed delighted; the nest was right on one corner of the island, among the grass, and on the bottom of it lay two big grayish-brown eggs with black spots, bigger than any goose-egg.

Marie and Louise shouted and laughed, but Beata was very still and shy. She begged her father to let her stand on the island, only for one minute and take one of the loon's eggs in her hand, "so that she could see it better," she said.

Her father would not refuse, lifted her in his arms and placed her on the floating turf, but told her that she must only touch the egg with her finger tips, for else the bird would know that some one had meddled with it and would never hatch the young one out.

So there stood Beata at last on the green floating island! and she grew pale with excitement as she stooped to pick up the grayish-brown egg. She took it between two fingers. Now she could have whatever she chose! What do you think she wished? To become an English princess? No, she knew something much better than that; her lips moved and she murmured softly:

"I wish that little Beata was safe and sound, and sitting under the briar rose again!"

But just at that moment the loon rose up close by her; and when she saw Beata standing by her

nest with an egg in her hand, she gave such a shrill, shrill scream, that, in her alarm, Beata dropped the egg. It fell into the nest right upon the other, and—crash! they both broke in two, so that the yokes spirted out.

Beata stood petrified, with the right hand, which had held the egg, still upraised, until her father lifted her on to the raft again. Then the tears

gushed from her eyes and she told him the whole story; but she promised faithfully that it should be the last time, as it was the first, that she would be so naughty a girl. Her father said that that was a good resolve, which he hoped she would always keep, and then he rowed them to shore.

But the loon forsook her nest from that time forth, and the green island has grown fast to the land.

THE "MISS MUFFETT" SERIES.

(No. V.)



LITTLE Dutch Gretchen sat in the kitchen,
Eating some nice sauerkraut,
When the little dog Schneider
Came and sat down beside her,
And little Dutch Gretchen went out.

TEN LITTLE COUNTRY BOYS.

(An old song to a new tune.)



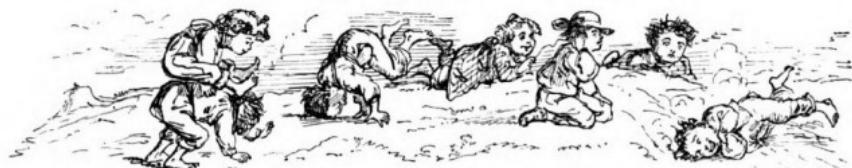
TEN little country boys underneath a vine;
A darning-needle frightened one, and then there were but nine.



Nine little country boys swinging on a gate;
One turned a somersault, and then there were but eight.



Eight little country boys learning about heaven;
One fell fast asleep, and then there were but seven.



Seven little country boys, full of monkey tricks;
One rolled down the hill, and then there were but six.



Six little country boys going to rob a hive;
A bumble-bee stung one, and then there were but five.



Five little country boys asking for some more;
One burst his little self, and then there were but four.



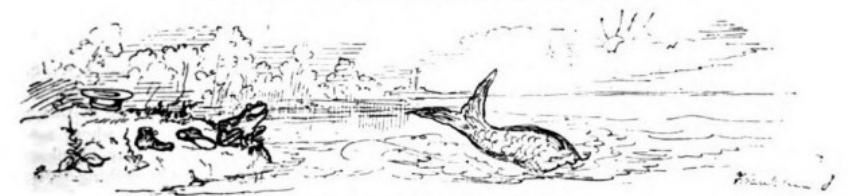
Four little country boys climbing up a tree;
The farmer came and whipped one, and then there were but three.



Three little country boys, gayly dressed in blue;
One tumbled overboard, and then there were but two.



Two little country boys, both named John;
One knocked the other down, and then there was but one.



One little country boy diving for a penny;
A little fish swallowed him, and then there was n't any.